



AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) In a method of playing a conventional or variant game of blackjack between a dealer and a player where the player is dealt two initial cards and the dealer is dealt a single initial card (the "three initial cards"), an improvement comprising the steps of:
 - (a) allowing the player to place a side bet;
 - (b) paying or collecting the side bet in accordance with a pre-established set of rules which cover all possible combinations of the three initial cards;
 - (c) **and wherein the pre-established set of rules provides a winning side bet for the player where the sum of the three initial cards is greater than or equal to 19, but not greater than 21.**
2. (Cancelled)
3. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 ~~[[2]]~~ wherein the game is played with at least three decks and wherein the pre-established set of rules provides a winning side bet for the player in one or more of the following circumstances
 - (a) the three initial cards are sequential and of the same suit; and
 - (b) the three initial cards are the same card and of the same suit.
4. (Original) The method of claim 3 wherein the only winning circumstance where the three initial cards are sequential are if the cards are 6, 7 and 8.
5. (Original) The method of claim 3 or 4 wherein the only winning circumstance where the three initial cards are the same are if the cards are all 7.
6. (Original) The method of claim 1 where in the pre-established set of rules provides winning side bets in accordance with Table 1 or Table 2.

7. (Currently Amended) A method of playing blackjack or 21, comprising the steps of:
- (a) dealing two initial cards to a player and a single initial card to a dealer (the "three initial cards");
 - (b) allowing the player to place a side bet;
 - (c) paying or collecting the side bet in accordance with a pre-established set of rules which cover all possible combinations of the three initial cards, **and which provides winning side bets in accordance with Table 1 or Table 2;** and
 - (d) continuing with the blackjack game.
8. (Cancelled)